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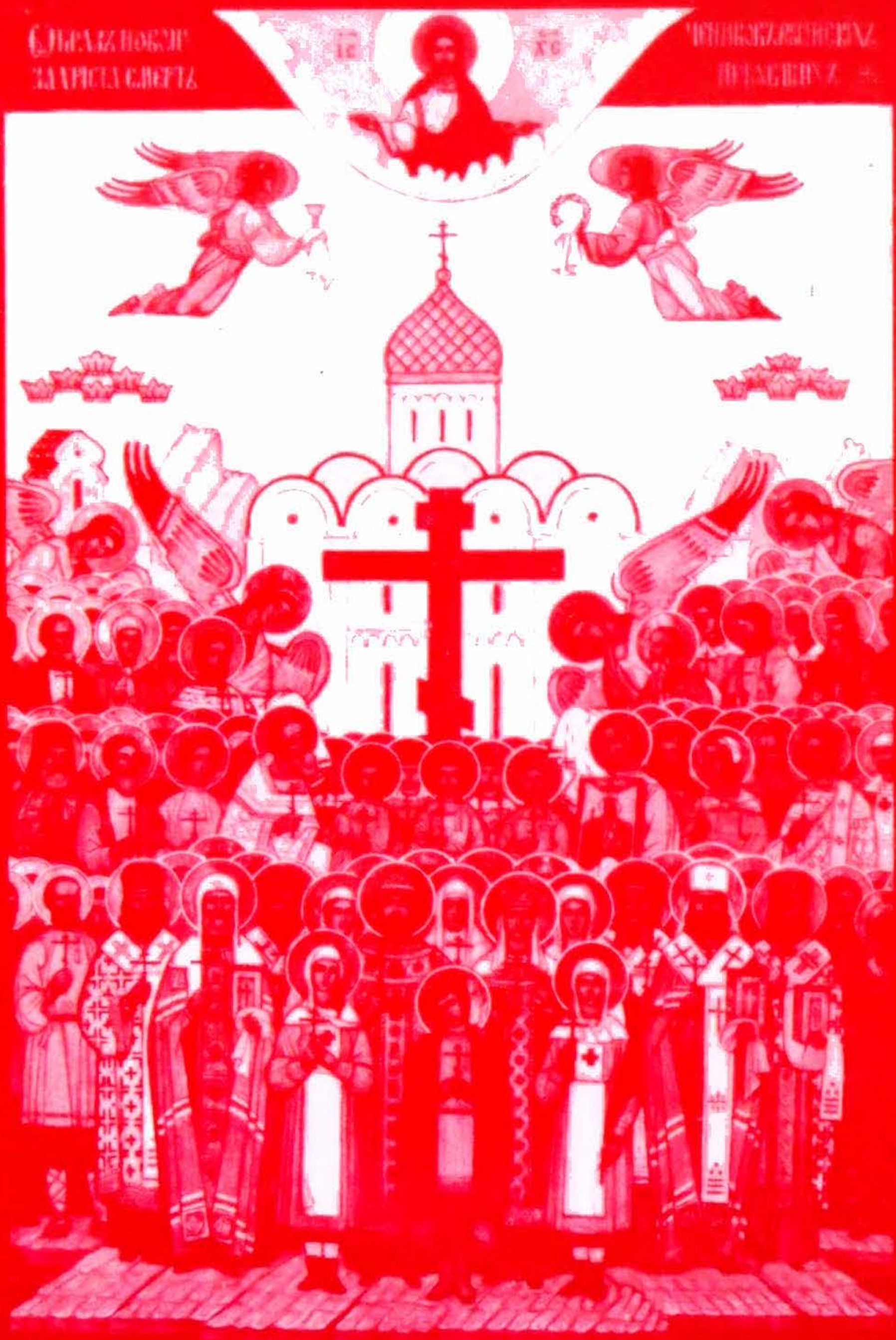

Letters

A LETTER TO THE SEPULCHRE OF ARCHBISHOP JOHN (San Francisco)

Thank you ever so much for sending the healing oil from our dear Vladyka's sepulchre. May God speed the day when our beloved Vladyka shall be glorified among the saints of God!

We wish to report that my mother used the oil on a small sore-scar she had on her face. The scar had not gone away with any other treatment. Within two days after using the oil, the scar was completely gone and the surrounding area almost completely healed! I myself am using the oil for a sore on my foot. After three days, the sore has now closed and appears to be healing also!

Yours in Christ,
Vladimir Raasch
St. Paul, Minnesota

ST. GREGORY OF TOURS

I'm glad to see the resumption of Gregory of Tours' Lives of the Fathers. Will this be published separately? Please consider it.

On page 73 of the 1976 St. Herman's Calendar you said that you would print St. Gregory's *Life of the Fathers* as a separate book. I wish you would also print the other seven of his *Books of Miracles*. A few years ago I read the Catholic University translation of St. Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*. This would also be a most useful and edifying book for you to print.

By the way, you gave no feast day for St. Nicetius the Bishop in *The Orthodox Word* #94. According to John Coulson's biographical dictionary *The Saints* (Angelus Books, 1958), St. Nicetius is commemorated on 2 April.

Father Joseph Frawley
New York.

Ed. note: We do plan to print St. Gregory's *Life of the Fathers* as a separate book when the twenty chapters have appeared in *The Orthodox Word*.

ORTHODOXY IN PUERTO RICO

We of the multilingual (Spanish, English, Slavonic, Arab, and Greek) Antiochian Ortho-

(continued on page 94)

From this day, from this hour,
from this minute, let us strive
to love God above all,
and fulfill His holy will.

THE ORTHODOX WORD

For the Mission of True Orthodox Christianity

Established with the blessing of His Eminence the late *John (Maximovitch)*, Archbishop of Western America and San Francisco, Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia.

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COVER: Central part of the icon of the New Martyrs of Russia in the Russian Orthodox Church of the Epiphany, Boston, Mass., painted by Nicholas A. Papkov.

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The Glorification of the Russian New Martyrs

By Archbishop Anthony of Geneva and Western Europe

THE CHURCH IN THE FIRST CENTURIES

THE APOSTLES, the pillars of the Church who proclaimed the preaching of the Gospel to the whole world, all except for the Apostle John the Theologian, received a martyr's death before the end of the first century. In them were fulfilled the words of Christ: "Ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake" (Matt. 10:22). The blood of the Apostles, and with them of a multitude of martyrs, moistened the Church abundantly from the middle of the first to the beginning of the fourth century. The first martyrs became the glory, the power, and the symbol of victory for the whole Christian world. Many prepared themselves to become martyrs, for there seemed to be no other path for one who believes in Christ, in this world which lies in evil! The ideal of the most powerful and strong was to shed their blood for Him Who was crucified for our sake.

The devil fought with the Church, "the pillar and ground of the Truth" (1Tim. 3:15), not only by the physical annihilation of Christians, but also by means of lying. Already in the century of the Apostles there appeared many false teachers and heretics who disturbed the Christians; the Apostles decisively exposed them in their epistles to their flock.

ICON OF NEW MARTYRS OF RUSSIA

AS PAINTED BY ARCHIMANDRITE CYPRIAN OF JORDANVILLE

From the beginning of the second century the Apostolic Fathers, filled with grace and truth, fearlessly continued the preaching of the Gospel. A whole legion of God-bearing hierarchs, theologians, apologists, and shepherds of the Church arose. The sheep of the rational flock followed them with full confidence and love through the nets of lies, sorrows, and sufferings which were thrown out by the devil. Many of them also received a martyr's crown.

The fourth century shines with the glory of the greatest hierarchs and teachers of the Church: Athanasius the Great, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom, and others. Believers even to our day follow after the voice of these fearless confessors of the Truth. It is sufficient to say that one of them taught a certain doctrine, and those who are wavering are confirmed in the Truth.

The same fourth century opened a new page in the history of the Church, revealing to the world the beauty of monastic struggle. The deserts were filled with heavenly men and earthly angels, desert-dwellers, hermits who abandoned everything and followed after Christ. The Christian world listened to the authority of the desert, and temptations and heresies revealed their powerlessness before the spiritual height of the fathers of the desert.

The Church made its way triumphantly, preceded by Apostles, martyrs, hierarchs, and fathers of the desert, through the sorrows, persecutions, temptations, and lies which were foretold by the Divine Teacher. And the Church, with Christ, conquered the world, showing it the beauty and height of its teaching, its life, its struggle, its self-renunciation, and triumph of heaven over earth.

THE CHURCH IN OUR DAYS

Christ, who told his followers "ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake," spoke also other bitter words: "when the Son of Man cometh (in His Second Coming), shall He find faith on the earth?"(Luke 18:8). These sorrowful words begin already to be fulfilled in our times, for the contemporary Christian world presents a sad picture.

Where are the great ecumenical teachers after whose voice the children of the Church might follow with full confidence? Alas, their fiery and golden lips have been silenced! It is not after the shepherds that the world now goes, but the shepherds adapt themselves to the world, seeking its glory and trembling before its powerful ones. So rarely do we hear the fearless. courageous, righteous voice of those whom Christ commanded to shepherd His sheep.

Ecumenism, which has risen up against the dogma of the Church; modernism which corrupts the life of the Church; the pleasing of and submission to the powerful of this world; lack of sincerity–this is the air contemporary pastors breathe,and they think to conduct the flock of Christ after themselves.

And the monasticism of our days? Where are the great luminaries of the angel–like life? Where are the spiritual blossoms of the desert? Where is the height of the struggle of renouncing the world? The ancient monasteries became empty for the most part; with few exceptions they barely contain within their sacred walls a small remnant of those who once dedicated themselves to God. And even the sincere monks who seek salvation are far from the spiritual heights of the ancients. Our world does not seek the higher struggle.

And one could fall into despondency and decide that the spirit of Christian zeal has dried up, that no longer is there that faith that conquered the world and everything that is in the world!

THE MARTYRS OF OUR TIME

But one could think this only if there had not shone forth in the Church's heaven, as bright stars, *the contemporary Martyrs*. After all, we live in an age of new Martyrs for Christ, and they are not at all to be distinguished from the ancient ones. They are the light of the Church, they are our hope, our expectation; the Church even now lives and is strengthened and grows by their blood.

It is the Russian Church which first of all has given these martyrs of the twentieth century. When the militant atheists made their challenge to Christ, the Russian church answered

by the martyr's blood of its best sons and daughters! Thousands of martyrs have given their life for Him Who loved them. The persecutors are not merely fiercely uprooting Christianity on the territory of the U.S.S.R.; by their words and acts they are testifying that they fear the martyrs even after their death. "There are no martyrs for faith and never have been any," they falsely testify to the world. "The Soviet authority has only fought against people who did not wish to accept the new order of life, against evil-minded politicians":these words are repeated after the atheists by the unfree representatives of the Moscow Patriarcate. A bishop of the Church of Christ would not pronounce such a lie—a lie against which the very stones cry out!

There is more and more information on those martyred and killed for Christ. The atheists are unable to hide the truth; no one any longer believes in their lies. And the children of the Church more and more often ask the question: Is it not time to see the contemporary martyrs in the glory of the Heavenly Father, as inheritors of His eternal Kingdom? Is it not time to pray *to* them and not *for* them?

WHOM CAN WE CALL MARTYRS?

Is it not time, in spite of the atheist propaganda, to speak the truth about the true Christians in our luke-warm century?

But before answering clearly and simply: "It is time and more than time!" we must prepare ourselves for this, so as to avoid an incorrect interpretation, a misunderstanding.or objections which are made out of ignorance.

First of all, we must understand clearly and explain to others the fact that the martyrs of whom we speak are not simply victims of the Revolution, as some people think. Even though it is true that the Russian Revolution was an open challenge to God, the Creator of man and the world, by no means all those who were killed can be called martyrs for Christ.

We can give this name only to those *whose life as pious Christians is well known to the Church, and whose death for faith in Christ is beyond doubt.*

In the first rank of martyrs there are the clergy. the shepherds of the Church who were killed only because they were servants of God; they were killed sacrilegiously, with mockery against the One Whom they served. Let us name at least those whom the whole Christian world should know: the first martyr, Metropolitan Vladimir; Metropolitans Benjamin, Cyril, Joseph, Agathangelus, Peter, and others. Patriarch Tikhon, even though he was not killed was still tortured "by refined moral tortures which the crude age of Nero and Diocletian did not yet know," wrote Metropolitan Anastassy.

They killed bishops, monastics, laymen, and even children, by hunger, by cold, by labor beyond one's strength in prisons and camps of death; they shot them, they mocked them; they cut off their tongues and ears, beat them to death, buried them alive in the ground, drowned them in rivers, hung them on the royal gates in churches, killed them together with their wives and children. They killed them, declaring their only accusation: This was a servant of God!

But there was a way for them to avoid tortures and death, to preserve their life and that of their close ones-this was to renounce Christ and go over into the camp of the persecutors; but only a few people took advantage of this.

The pastors of the church and after them their flocks, went like sheep to slaughter, voiceless and obedient to the will of God. Metropolitan Anastassy has written: "When at the end of 1917 the fiery trials began for the Church, the hieromartyrs and simple martyrs, both men and women, understanding the will of God, offered themselves as an immaculate sacrifice (Heb. 10: 6–9). Following in the steps of the Eternal High Priest and Mediator of the New Testament, they entered into the sanctuary with their blood, that they might cleanse the sins of the people (Heb. 9:12–15); for without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness (Heb. 9:22)

Concerning the number of those who received martyrs' crowns we have much information: the two volumes of Protopresbyter Michael Polsky, *Russia's New Martyrs*, as well as other testimonies. For example, there is a list of the New Martyrs, compiled with love, and carefully verified, which was received from Russia in 1976. In it are given the numbers of

those martyred for Christ in various regions. Thus, in the region of Kharkov there were 98 martyrs; in Odessa and Kherson, 191; in Petrograd, 36; in Novgorod, 68; in Arkhangelsk, 99; in Stavropol, 139; in Vladikavkaz, 72; in Ekaterinoslav, 92; and so forth. In all, according to this list, there were 8000 killed for Christ; but of course there were many more than this.

"They resurrected before us the images of Saints Ignatius, Polycarp, Chrysostom, and many other confessors and hieromartyrs. Their valor has illumined with new glory the Orthodox Church" (from the Eulogy of the New Martyrs by Metropolitan Anastassy).

They have glorified the Church in the days of frightful persecutions; they stand unwavering now, at the head of the Orthodox world; they are our glory, our victory, and our joy.

THE REJECTION OF THE MARTYRS IS A REJECTION OF CHRIST

The official representatives of the Churches of God, however, are renouncing this glory and this Christian victory. They are preparing something they call a "great, holy pan-Orthodox council," at which, before the whole world, they will solemly *renounce* the contemporary martyrs, they will pass them over in complete silence—a silence of shame by which their lips will be closed by the militant **atheists**, with the help of the Moscow Patriarchate—something they are doing not for just the first time.

In what form will this council appear before the world, having renounced the martyrs? What will remain to it? We can have an idea of this from the pitiful, empty program which has been compiled with difficulty for it. The pastors of the Church, it turns out, will gather together and decide questions which, so they think, "demand immediate action": how to shorten the fasts and weaken church discipline, concerning the primacy and privileges of the Church of Constantinople, concerning the further development of ecumenical contacts—and *that is all!*

What a frightful and hopeless emptiness at a time when all the powers of hell have armed themselves against the Church!

The questions of militant atheism and the contemporary heresies which have torn away from the Church millions of believers by force and deception evidently do not interest the pastors. These questions, it would seem, should be the first on the agenda of a council. Its participants, having renounced the martyrs and their struggle, cannot call the faithful to imitate their example! And how will they give rebirth to the spirit of Christian zeal, of monastic struggle, things which insistently demand renewal? How will they console the confessors who even now are languishing in prisons and exile? By going deeper into ecumenism, they will be unable firmly and uncompromisingly to confess faith in the One and Only Church.

Such a council will cover Orthodoxy with ineffaceable shame; for at the foundation of our faith lie martyrdom, struggle, and the glorification of sanctity.

This is why there has come an urgent time of testifying to the struggle of the New Martyrs, of giving them what is their due, so as to give rebirth to Christian life. "The glorification of the martyrs is ripe, and we must not put it off! By not glorifying them we deprive ourselves of the greatest help of God by their prayers," a contemporary confessor of the Church has written.

CAN OUR CHURCH CANONIZE SAINTS?

Every Orthodox Autocephalous Local Church has the right to canonize its own saints by a decision of its Council of Bishops. Other Orthodox sister Churches take note of such a decision concerning a canonization made by one of them.

The martyrs of whom we speak could be glorified with the Saints by the (whole) Russian Orthodox Church. But it is now without a head, dispersed, and it has no bishops who act and teach freely. It is suppressed in utter silence. There is no suitable church organ which could perform the official act of canonization.

Do we have to wait, in order to do this, for the time when the Russian Church will be delivered from persecutions? Can

not the Russian Church Outside of Russia do what the Russian Church as a whole is not now able to do, just as St. John of Kronstadt, St. Herman of Alaska, and Holy Blessed Xenia were glorified by a Council of our Bishops?

Our Church sees its right to do this in the fact that it has always considered itself the free part of the Russian Church, striving in no way and nowhere to tear itself away from her, not betraying her, not seeking more advantageous positions among the hierarchs of other Churches. Is it not our duty before the Mother Church to perform the act of glorification of the holy martyrs?

In answering this question, let us remember that the glorification of many saints began with so-called local glorification—that is, at the place where the righteous one lived, where many people knew his pious life, where people turned to him for help during his lifetime and prayed to him after his death and received what they asked for. Gradually the renown of the saint spread farther and farther, information about miracles from prayer to him became the inheritance of an ever greater number of believers, and finally there arose before the Church as a whole the question of the canonization of the new saint, which was then brought into reality at a Council of Bishops.

It is evident that the glorification of the New Martyrs by our Church, just like the glorification of St. John of Kronstadt, St. Herman of Alaska, and Blessed Xenia, because of circumstances will be at first local, not final, inasmuch as the official act of canonization by the whole Russian Church will follow after her deliverance from persecution.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS IN THE GLORIFICATION OF MARTYRS

In the case of martyrs, however, even this is not needed; that is, the recognition of a martyr as a saint does not demand the official sanction of the church authority. Someone killed for confessing Christ, immediately after his martyr's death, has been considered by the Church as a holy martyr

even without a clarification of how he lived and what he did, and without waiting for miracles. It was enough for wild beasts to tear to pieces the confessor of Christ in the arena of the Roman coliseum to make his remains revered by believers as holy relics, preserved as something holy. There were cases when Roman pagan soldiers who were present at the torture of Christians were astounded by their patience and confessed themselves Christians and were killed for this. And despite the fact they had lived as pagans, from the moment of their baptism in their own blood the Church has considered them as holy martyrs. We may take as an example the Martyr Boniface (Dec. 19) and others.

THE ATTITUDE OF BELIEVERS IN RUSSIA TO THE GLORIFICATION

Great was our joy when contemporary Russia responded to our bold desire to glorify the martyrs with sympathy, understanding and an expression of joy with regard to it. Here are the words of a confessor from there, who is now condemned to six years of privation of freedom: "We were thunderstruck by the news that your Council of Bishops will canonize the holy Russian New Martyrs. This is an unhoped for, unexpected joy for us. We are deeply convinced that this event will have a profound influence on the further course of historical events and will play a key role in the further fate of Russia and the whole world."

Another bold confessor from there writes: "Concerning the glorification of the martyrs a small part of the Orthodox Church has spoken out—the Church Outside of Russia—and this does it honor. I think that all the other parts of the Orthodox Church will also support this." And further: "To be martyred by the atheists, and all the more by the frightful tortures which they have used, means to become a holy martyr. One must only know that they did not renounce Christ in the torments, that they remained faithful to him unto death. Sufferings, like water in a fiery font, not only wash away everything, but even burn away everything imperfect, and a man comes out clean and is purified like gold."

A SPECIAL KIND OF MARTYR: PASSION-BEARERS

Now one must indicate a special kind of martyr; those who have suffered innocently. Among the number of these in Russia are the Holy Martyrs Boris and Gleb, the Tsarevich of Moscow Dimitry, Prince Michael of Tver, Andrew Bogoliubsk, and others. They were not killed for faith in Christ, but nevertheless they were numbered by the Church among the saints. The reason for their murder was political, but for their pious life and their submission to the will of God, even unto death, the Church has glorified them in the ranks of the holy martyrs.

Such ones in our time are the Royal Martyrs: Emperor Nicholas, Empress Alexandra, Crown Prince Alexis, Grand duchesses Olga, Tatiana, Maria, Anastasia, Grand-duchess Elisabeth, and the Grand-dukes John, Igor, and Constantine.

Certainly, the greatest doubt about them is evoked by the glorification with the saints of Emperor Nicholas II.

First of all let us say that, by the decree of the church authorities, in our church now for many years at memorial services we have been commemorating the murdered Sovereign as Tsar-martyr, and every one has become accustomed to this. Secondly, one must know what the relationship of the Orthodox Church has been to the Emperor. The Church looked on him not only as the secular head of the government, but also as a sacred person, the bearer of a special divine charisma! During the coronation the Sacrament of chrismation is performed on the Tsar for the second time (the first time was at his baptism)–something which not a single Christian has a right to. And just as in the Sacrament of Chrismation at baptism, by the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit there is given grace to the baptized one, and the power of God for the struggle of Christian life, as also for the anointed one of God–the Tsar–there is given grace for the governing of the people of God.

This special divine charisma makes the Orthodox Tsar a servant of God, responsible for the people before God.

"By God's Providence he was vouchsafed to suffer at a moment when he had no more political authority and had rejected all attempts to restore this authority. Tsar Nicholas suffered as a symbol of the Orthodox kingdom, as a bearer of the age old church idea—the authority of God over the earth. and in the fact he was vouchsafed to suffer precisely in this way we see yet one more of the divine testimonies of his sanctity."

And again. "The historically universal meaning of the martyr's death of the Emperor and his family consists in the fact that here the constantinopolitan period of the existence of the church of Christ comes to an end and there begins a new martyric, apocalyptic age. It begins with the sacrifice of the Orthodox anointed Tsar and his family."

And our brothers from there conclude their fervent confession of the righteousness of the murdered Tsar with these words: "washed by the Blood of Christ and his own blood, which cleansed his most serious sins, he in our opinion is worthy of canonization with the saints."

Here is yet another testimony of a contemporary confessor:"One must glorify all the martyrs for faith, without making a selection and all the more without standing on a political point of view as is done with relation to the Tsar. People try to make him guilty of something without even imagining that in accusing the Tsar-martyr they stand in the ranks of his torturers! He died without betraying his faith."

But apart from this, we know the elevated piety of the Emperor and his purely Christian attitude to life. "The meekness and humble acceptance of the frightful lot prepared for him raises the Royal Pair to the highest degree of Christian struggle"-this is another opinion from people in Russia.

Many letters of the Empress and Grand-duchesses have come down to us and have been published in a separate book, "Letters from the Royal Family in Exile," They testify, as official documents, to the piety of the victims, to their patience, meekness, humility, fervent prayers, submission to the will of God in abasement and sufferings. This book should be read by everyone so that all might be convinced of the righteousness of the Tsar and his family.

But if anyone, even with a sincere desire, is not convinced of this; if, behind the image of the ruler does not see the image of the Tsar-martyr—he does not need to pray to him for now, since the fact of the canonization cannot compel anyone to do this. One cannot force anyone against his will to pray, to love, and to believe. But let such a one not disturb by his criticism and doubts those who reverently bow down before the memory of the Tsar-martyr.

THE GLORIFICATION OF THE NEW MARTYRS– A PAN-ORTHODOX SOLEMNITY

Some ask in perplexity how the glorification of the Russian Martyrs can be a pan-Orthodox solemnity. Let us reply with the words of Apostle Paul that in the Church "There is neither Jew nor Greek, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28). That they may all be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also (the disciples, the children of the church) may be one in Us" (John 17:21)—thus our Savior prayed to the Father, and such He wishes to see us in His Church.

We should praise the martyrs with one mouth and one heart, no matter what people or what Church they might belong to: Their prayers are a pledge of our rebirth, their struggle is an example for imitation, their blood is the justification of the history of the Church in our times.

We are all one flock of Christ in the Western European Diocese: French, Serbs, Swiss, Russians, Spaniards, Romanians, Italians, Greeks—let us all with trembling and joy prepare ourselves for the glorification of the contemporary martyrs. Let us prepare for this rare solemnity by increased prayers, by a strict fulfillment of the church rules, by fasting, by reading of the lives of the martyrs and their struggle.

The existence of the contemparary martyrs testifies to the fact that Christians have not yet become a salt that has lost its savor, that faith has not yet been quenched on earth, that there is someone for us who are infirm and weak to follow.

Our brothers from Russia say; "The canonization of the new martyrs and confessors is not only a formal acknowledge–

ment of the clearly manifested sanctity of the righteous ones; it is a creative act which stands before the Church, something one may in truth call an ascetic deed (podvig), for it is impossible to perform it according to the will of God without spiritually communing with the struggle of the martyrs and confessors. For it has been said: "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward" (Matt. 10:41).

Holy New Martyrs and Confessors, pray to God for us! May the will of God and His power be performed in our weakness!

The glorification, if it is pleasing to God, will occur in the Synodal Cathedral in New York City on Sunday, November 1, of this year (October 19 by the old calender), and on the eve at the all-night vigil. It will be performed by the Council of all the Bishops of our Church.

Archbishop Anthony of Geneva
and Western Europe

(A report read at the 15th Diocesan Conference of the Western-European Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia on June 6, 1981, in Luxemburg.)

ANNOUNCING A NEW BOOK

ORTHODOX DOGMATIC THEOLOGY

By PROTOPRESBYTER MICHAEL POMAZANSKY

The most complete account to date in English of Orthodox dogmatic teaching, written from a "synthetic"point of view that emphasizes the oneness of the Church's teaching, even though this may be expressed in various forms by the Fathers and Saints of the Church. A product of the unbroken Patristic tradition at its best, the book clearly but calmly distinguishes the Orthodox teaching from the various distortions and errors that are part of Roman Catholic and Protestant teaching. The Russian original serves as the textbook for the course of Dogmatic Theology in Holy Trinity Seminary, Jordanville, New York.

Introduction: The sources of Christian Doctrine
Chapter One: Our Knowledge of God.
Chapter Two: The Dogma of the Holy Trinity.
Chapter Three: God and the Creation.
Chapter Four: The Providence of God.
Chapter Five: Concerning Evil and Sin.
Chapter Six: God and the Salvation of Mankind.
Chapter Seven: The Church of Christ.
Chapter Eight: The Holy Mysteries.
Chapter Nine: Prayer.
Chapter Ten: Eschatology.
Appendix I: On the New Currents in Russian Philosophico-Theological Thought.
Appendix II: The Ecumenical Councils and the Heresies of the First Millenium (brief definitions of each).
Appendix III: The Fathers and Teachers of the Church (Biographical Dictionary of Names Mentioned in the Text).

(Publication details will be announced in *The Orthodox Word.*)

NEW PERSECUTIONS AT

POCHAEV

IN THE WEST OF RUSSIA

The situation of the monks in the Pochaev Lavra (Monastery - Ed.) has been deteriorating markedly since December 1979. At that time, all the novices who had been living at the monastery with the tacit agreement of the authorities were forced to leave. The poor and wayfarers who had been sheltering at the monastery (some fifty persons in all) were driven out. Believers arriving on pilgrimage can no longer remain at the monastery for any length of time. The only visitors allowed to stay at the monastery are priests and other clerics, and even they must fill out an official form in triplicate.

The abbot of the monastery, Archimandrite Iakov, Monastery council have instituted a campaign against those monks who have become widely-known among believers, and who are much loved for the purity of their lives and the spiritual force of their teaching. As a result of this campaign, Hegumen Amvrosi (a senior monk - Keston College), who is known and revered the length and breadth of Russia as a great spiritual teacher and preacher, was forbidden to preach or hear confession from January 1980 until 25 May (Pentecost). During this time he was also forbidden to have any contact with his spiritual children.

It is known that the abbot visited the local militia and requested assistance in dealing 'with that anti-Soviet Amvrosi' and then travelled to the Exarchate in Kiev with the same request. An intolerant atmosphere was created around Father Amvrosi. Frequently after hearing confessions he virtually had to flee from the church as 'Komsomol' groups shouted threats of physical violence at him and otherwise sought to provoke trouble.

On 20 February 1981 the situation took a new turn. From that day, the abbot and the dean sanctioned the preaching of public sermons to the effect that among the monks there is one who, despite his seeming piety, is in truth just the reverse, and gained entry into the monastery by trickery and deceit. It was declared that this monk maintains contacts with 'the Masons', with 'Zhidy' (a derogatory term for Jews - Keston College) and with 'occultists', that he studies a book called 'Black Magic', and that his tactics are 'like those of Mao Tse-Tung' - first he insinuates himself into people's confidence, and then betrays them.

Finally (on 1 March 1981) Archimandrite Liveri named Father Amvrosi as this monk, and implied that he had accomplices. That night the abbot and dean entered Father Amvrosi's cell and conducted an arbitrary search. They then handed Father Amvrosi a written directive, signed by Metropolitan Nikolai of Lvov, expelling him from the monastery. Immediately after this, a group of militia appeared and demanded Father Amvrosi's passport in order to cancel his residence permit.

When Father Amvrosi left the monastery, he went to stay with hes niece in a nearby village. Here he was again visited by the militia, accompanied by Abbot Iakov and Dean Pankrati, who accused him of theft and conducted a search of the whole house.

During all of Father Amvrosi's stay with his niece, he was constantly harassed by the militia, who demanded that he surrender his passport.

Early in March Father Amvrosi moved to Kiev, hoping to obtain a review of his 'case'.

The current situation is that other monks, who have become known and loved by many, are under threat of expulsion from the monastery. As it is, there is virtually no preaching or hearing of confession at the monastery these days, for the clerics who are permitted to perform these offices do so in an ignorant and unspiritual way.

It is known that Father Amvrosi's spiritual children have sent petitions to Patriarch Pimen, appealing to him to help their spiritual father.

(Taken from *Keston News Service*, no. 123, June 5, 1981)

Author's Preface to the English Translation of "Dogmatic Theology"

In the Church of Christ Truth is one, as indeed it should be. Historically it is one, common to all the Church's faithful, and unchanging; it has been such from the great day of the Apostolic Pentecost, when the New Testament Church received its beginning, and after that for the course of two thousand years until our time, and it will remain such until our time, and it will remain such until the end of time. This attribute of the Church is splendidly expressed in the church hymn – the kontakion – for the commemoration of the First Ecumenical Council in Nicaea, which we celebrate on the Sunday before the solemn day of Holy Pentecost. Here are the words of this church hymn:

"The preaching of the Apostles and the dogmas of the Fathers have sealed the one faith of the Church. And wearing the garment of truth, woven of the theology from above, she rightly dispenses and glorifies the great mystery of piety."

Thus, the great mystery of Christian piety, that is, life in Christ, is built on an unchanging unity of faith in the one Truth. Arbitrary attempts to introduce into our faith anything new – even though they do occur, sometimes from the naive desire of private individuals to attract attention to the faith by this means, or to put freshness into church life – are decisively rejected by the Orthodox Church.

The present book – an exposition of Christian dogmas – has for its subject what the Holy Apostles teach us in their epistles, what the great Holy Fathers kept in its power and authenticity in their self-sacrificing ministry against various heretical attacks (Sts. Athanasius the Great, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian, John Chrysostom), what the

Church has preserved, guarded, defended, and confesses unaltered in our days. There is no Orthodox theology that is in any particular way "Russian" or that belongs to any other nation, as is sometimes supposed by superficial observers. By human nature "imperfection" is something that belongs to each of us and to everything we do.

However, since faith is active in life and is a living thing, the circumstances of various epochs cause dogmatic expositions to devote special attention to those points of faith which *in that epoch* it is desirable, profitable, important to make firm in the consciousness of readers. Thus, in the present exposition of Orthodox theology a special place is allotted to the truly close and inseparable bond *between the Church on earth and the Heavenly Church* – our spiritual communion in the Church with "the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven" (Heb. 12:22-23). Here is to be found the authentic pleroma – the fullness, the catholicity of the Church. Special attention has been directed in the book to this attribute of the Church. This truth has been forgotten, ignored, or completely rejected in the great part of what is called Christianity.

The fullness of actual life in the Church on earth is manifested in three aspects: (a) confession of faith; (b) moral life; and (c) the Divine services. Therefore, each Christian is called (a) to believe; (b) to live and act according to faith; and (c) to glorify God and to pray. Although dogmatic theology occupies itself only with the one aspect of confession of faith, still it is from faith that the second and third aspects come – life according to faith, and prayer. And so the present book is called to indicate likewise the principles on which are erected the Christian *moral* life and the Christian life bound up with the *Divine services*.

The present exposition of faith attempts to fulfill this obligation: (a) It indicates what kind of moral life is directly dictated by the exploit of Christ on the Cross. This path is our *personal struggle in the name of the Cross of the Lord*. The always expressive visible banner of the Cross serves for our gaze as a constant reminder of this. The very concept of the spiritual Cross contains in itself not only the various forms of personal struggle, but also the involuntary sorrows of life which are accepted in humility before the Providence of God.

Finally, (b) the book indicates what forms and kinds of our *prayer and glorification of God* proceed from the fullness of our beliefs. The general character of our worship of God is dictated by the words of the Psalm: Bless the Lord, O my soul, and *all that is within me* bless His holy name'' (Ps. 102). ''All that is within me'' means all the capacities of the soul. Therefore, it is perfectly natural for them to be manifested to our holy feelings in the various forms of noble human activity, the talents given us by God. We call on nature itself to join us in the Church's glorification.

Such is the aim and the content of the present book.

Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky
June, 1981

Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky

THEOLOGY IN THE ANCIENT TRADITION

Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky is unique among contemporary Orthodox theologians. At 93 years of age he is surely the oldest of those still writing theological articles; but more important, he received his theological formation not in any of the theological academies of the present day, all of which reflect to some degree the theological uncertainties and divisions of today's Orthodoxy, but in the pre-Revolutionary academies of Russia, when Orthodoxy was still one in spirit, was still rooted in the age-old past of theological tradition, and did not suffer from the "identity crisis" that plagues so much of Orthodox theological literature today.

Some Orthodox writers today seem to have so little awareness of the distinctness of Orthodoxy that they lead people into the false opinion that Orthodoxy is scarcely different from the Western confessions at all, and if only a few more "joint theological committees" will work out a few more "agreed statements" about the faith, we can all be one again and even share the same Holy Mysteries; this is the aim of the various societies and activities of the "ecumenical movement."

The reaction to this movement, on the other hand, even when it goes under the name of a "patristic revival," sometimes produces a definition of Orthodoxy so narrow that it proclaims all but a small group of today's Orthodox to be without grace, or breaks off contact with its own Orthodox roots by declaring that only today are a few Orthodox theolo-

gians becoming free of the "Western captivity" (dominance by Roman Catholic or Protestant ideas) in which Orthodoxy has supposedly been held in recent centuries.

Both of these extremes are perilously close to losing their very identity as Orthodox. Perhaps the crucial test for the extremists of either side is that of *continuity*: Are they teaching the same teaching they received from their own fathers in the faith, who in turn received it from their Fathers, and so on in an unbroken line with the past? More often than not, the extremists will have to admit that – no, they themselves are "correcting the mistakes" of their fathers, that 19th-century theology (for example) is too narrow and anti-Western or (in the opposite extreme) too "scholastic" and pro-Western; that some respected Orthodox theologians of earlier centuries are "out of date" and inapplicable to today's "ecumenical" Christianity, or (in the opposite extreme) are "Westernizers" who "didn't understand the real Orthodox teaching" and should be rejected as Orthodox authorities.

Meanwhile, the genuine Orthodox tradition continues as it has always been, trying to preserve its integrity in the midst of these conflicting currents. Fortunately, this tradition has a way – with the help of God, Who looks after His Church – of preserving itself from the extremes that often try to deflect it from its course. This self-preservation and self-continuity of the Orthodox tradition is not something that requires the assistance of "brilliant theologians;" it is the result of the uninterrupted "catholic consciousness" of the Church which has guided the Church from the very beginning of its existence. It is this catholic consciousness which preserved the wholeness of Russian Orthodoxy in the 1920's when the extreme reforms of the "Living Church" seemed to have taken possession of the Church and many of its leading hierarchs and theologians; this same catholic consciousness is at work today and will continue to preserve Christ's Church through all the trials of the present day, just as it has for nearly 2000 years. Those who speak for it are often not the "brilliant theologians," who can be led astray as easily as anyone else, but more often humble laborers in Christ's vineyard who would be surprised and even offended that anyone should make anything of their labors or even call them "theologians."

One of such humble laborers in the Russian Church today is Father Michael Pomazansky.

Father Michael was born on November 7/19, 1888, in the town of Koryst in the province of Volhynia in the west of Russia. His father's family had been parish priests for generations, and the simple impressions from the churchly way of life of his childhood set their seal on Fr. Michael's whole life, influencing him more – as he himself has said – than all the theological schools he attended.

Fr. Michael's years of attending the theological preparatory school and seminary (1901-1908) coincided with the Russo-Japanese War and the first Russian Revolution of 1905, which threatened the end of the Orthodox way of life in Russia, but also made evident the need for faithfulness to Orthodox tradition in those who, like Fr. Michael, were church oriented. During these same years a great hierarch of the Russian Church was transferred to the diocese of Volhynia – Bishop (later Metropolitan) Anthony Khrapovitsky, a highly educated churchman, a flaming preacher, a devoted son of the Church and an ardent Russian patriot, but at the same time an enemy of mere routine and "taking for granted" in church life, a man of warm heart who had an especially close contact with and influence on young people, and especially future monks and clergy. Bishop Anthony had a great influence on the soul of the young student Michael.

Fr. Michael entered the Kiev Theological Academy in 1908, graduating from it in 1912. The Kiev Academy had long been a center for the defense of Orthodoxy in Western Russia, especially against the Latins, and had produced five Metropolitans who were numbered among the saints. The emphasis in the Academy in Fr. Michael's time was on solid theological and historical knowledge, and none of the professors was noted for special eloquence or "popularity." Fr. Michael's dissertation was on a technical historical subject: "Particularities of the Divine services in the Church of Western **Russia** according to the Printed Service Books of the 17th Century." Here he was able to study in detail the question of "Western influences" in the Russian Church.

After graduation, Fr. Michael spent two years in the south of Russia as a missionary among the sects that flourished there; this experience made him for life a zealous student of the New Testament which the sectarians distorted for their own ends, but which rightly understood contains the profound teaching of the Orthodox Church. In 1914 he was appointed an instructor in the Kaluga seminary not too far from Moscow. Here he remained for three years, until the outbreak of the Revolution. With the closing of the seminary at that time, he returned with his small

family to his homeland in the south; he had married the daughter of a priest, Vera Theodorovna Shumskaya, and had several children.

By an agreement between the Polish and Soviet governments, Fr. Michael's native village fell within the boundaries of Poland (only ten miles from the Soviet border). Fr. Michael received a teaching position in a Russian high school in Rovno, where he taught Russian language and literature, philosophy, and Latin. In this position he was able to send his children through high school, and once this responsibility was discharged he was able to receive ordination to the priesthood, in 1936.

His first assignment as priest was to the Warsaw cathedral of St. Mary Magdalen, where he served as a diocesan missionary; and when the main church in this cathedral was given over to Ukrainian services, he went with other clergy to the lower church, where Slavonic services were continued. Near the end of the Second World War (1944), he was able to go with his family to Germany, where he entered the clergy of the Russian Church Outside of Russia under Metropolitan Anastassy.

While in Warsaw, Fr. Michael was the unofficial editor of the church newspaper *The Word*, and after its closure he was official editor of the magazine *Sunday Reading*. In these years (1936-1944) he also published articles in the *Messenger of Orthodox Theologians* in Poland.

In Germany he was entrusted with the organization of the official organ of the Russian Church Abroad, *Church Life*; he was in charge of this from 1947 until his departure for America in August, 1949. Since that time he has lived at Holy Trinity Monastery at Jordanville, New York, teaching in the seminary there for many years, from the very beginning of its existence in 1950, and writing numerous articles for the monastery's periodicals,* in addition to his major work, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, which for long has been the seminary's textbook for its course in dogmatic theology.

Father Michael's writings have been on various church subjects: apologetics, defenses of the faith against modern errors (Bulgakov's "Sophiology," the "ecumenical movement," "renovationism" in liturgical theology, etc.), on various feast days and church services, on aspects of the teachings of the Holy Fathers (in particular, two enlightening comparisons of ancient Fathers with St. John of Kronstadt: St. Basil on the Six Days of Creation, and St. Symeon the New Theologian on grace), and many other subjects.

*** These have now been collected into two volumes in Russian: "Life, Faith, and the Church," Jordanville, 1976.**

Especially helpful to present-day Orthodox Christians who are surrounded by the non-Orthodox are his careful distinctions (especially in *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*) between Orthodox beliefs and those of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, even on some points which may seem outwardly identical. This he does without any tone of irritation against the non-Orthodox – something so common in polemical writings today – but, always after describing their views with fairness, he sets forth the Orthodox teaching in an objective manner that helps Orthodox Christians to understand their own faith much better.

In all his writings, Fr. Michael is not trying to discover anything "new" in Orthodox tradition, or to stand out for the sharpness of his criticisms – common faults in today's academic theology. Rather, he attempts to give only his own humble, serene reflections on the wealth of Orthodox teaching which he accepts as already established and experienced by centuries of theologians and simple Christians before him. Even when, for the sake of truth, he does find it necessary to criticize a view, whether inside or outside the Orthodox Church, he does it with such gentleness and good intention that it is impossible for anyone to be offended by him.

Most of all, in Fr. Michael's writings one may see a characteristic of genuine Orthodox theology that is so often lost sight of in our cold, rationalistic age. Theology is not primarily a matter of arguments, criticisms, proofs and disproofs; it is first of all men's *word about God*, in accordance with the Divinely-revealed teaching of Orthodoxy. Therefore, its first purpose and intent is always to inspire, to warm the heart, to lift one above the petty preoccupations of earth in order to glimpse the Divine beginning and end of all things and so to give one the energy and encouragement to struggle towards God and our heavenly homeland. This is certainly the meaning and spirit of the theology of Orthodoxy's three pre-eminent "theologians:" St. John the Evangelist, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and St. Symeon the New Theologian; they, one may say, have set the tone for Orthodox theology, and this remains the tone and the task of theology even in our cold-hearted and analytic age.

Father Michael's theology is in this warm-hearted and inspiring tone. He is not the only one to write Orthodox theology with this intent today, but he is one of the few, in an older generation that is fast vanishing, who can serve as a link between us and the genuine theology of the Holy Fathers. Fr. Michael himself would be offended to hear such words, or even to discover that we have written this much about him;

but that itself is only another sign that he is someone totally penetrated with the true spirit of Orthodox theology. May the younger generations learn from him!

The following brief extract from Fr. Michael's articles shows one of the predominant concerns of his writings. In it (which is only the introduction to a much longer article), he speaks of the "Heavenly Church," whose reality in the lives of Orthodox Christians sharply distinguishes them from Protestants, who have no contact with it in prayer and can only speculate about it. At the same time, however, he corrects the mistake of some theologians who, in combatting the false Protestant idea of an "invisible church" which transcends confessional boundaries, have over-emphasized the *earthly* side of the Church and thereby failed to take advantage of a truth which could even convert some Protestants to the truth: that, yes, there *is* an invisible, heavenly Church, known in the daily experience of prayer of Orthodox Christians – but it has nothing to do with the empty abstractions of the ecumenical movement. In the rest of this article Fr. Michael criticizes the polemical overemphasis on the earthly Church in two recent Russian theologians, and then sets forth the Orthodox teaching of the Heavenly Church in Holy Scripture and the Holy Fathers. ☙☙

Is There An Invisible Church?

By Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky*

Western Protestantism, broken into a hundred sects and denominations, naturally had to come to the question: Where is the true Church in the midst of all these confessional divisions? And it has found no other way out than to come to a teaching of an "invisible church" that mysteriously exists in the midst of all the differences and mistakes and sins of men – a church that is holy, whose membership is known only to God, and that consists only of those who are worthy of being in it.

However, it is not for nothing that our Divine Saviour has left us parables: the parable of the net that brings to shore not only good fish, but also bad; the parable of the field in which the owner leaves the tares to grow together with the good wheat until the harvest. The Apostles founded the Church through the visible Mystery of Baptism of all who declared to them their faith in Christ, and the Church was, as it remains, a net or field "for those who wish to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth," for those who seek eternal life but for the time being live "in hope," not yet having entered into heavenly repose.

*** Translated from volume one of his collected articles, "Life, Faith and the Church," Jordanville, 1976, pp. 198-207.**

IS THERE AN INVISIBLE CHURCH?

The Apostles founded outwardly "visible" communities with a definite membership, one in soul even though outwardly separated, and all these communities were the single Church of Christ. Such will the Church remain forever. Its aim is to call and prepare men for eternal life in Christ.

Therefore, the Orthodox Apostolic Church, for its part, replies: Such an invisible Church which, in the midst of many confessional divisions or above them, would single out the worthy people from among them and would unite them all – does not exist.

But nevertheless, this does not in the least mean that we Orthodox Christians do not believe in an Invisible Church. If we did not, we would not pronounce daily, and even several times a day, both in Divine services and in prayer at home, the words "I believe" in the Creed with regard to the Church; faith, in the definition of the Apostle, is "the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). To the three following and final subjects of the Creed we apply the words "I confess" and "I look for"... This means that in our teaching on the Church we acknowledge also its invisible sphere. Where and what is it?

This sphere is the *Heavenly Church.*

When we talk about the Church, and in our written discussions of it, we often, as it were, forget about this sphere, and by this very fact we lessen the spiritual power, we lose the grace-giving seed which is contained in the Orthodox understanding of the being and essence of the Church. And therefore our talk about the Church, the earthly Church, in the present period which is so difficult for faith, often evokes sorrow rather than giving consolation. Restricting our ideas about faith to the earthly sphere alone, we thereby impoverish ourselves. This can be felt especially now when, on the one hand, the Orthodox Local Churches are becoming isolated (from each other) in their earthly relations, and possibly deeper divisions lie ahead; and on the other hand, attempts are being made to form "one church" on earth on principles totally foreign to the Orthodox consciousness. It is not a cold, abstract recognition of the invisible Heavenly Church that we need; rather, with all our soul we must think and feel ourselves to be members of the "Church of the called" *in living and active communion* with the "Church of the chosen." For in this also is to be found in part our chosenness – not our personal, individual chosenness, but the chosenness of Orthodoxy among the Christian confessions.

When, in the last century, the Protestant spirit began to penetrate into Russian society, and in some places also into the simple people, our church writers had set before them the aim of opposing to the above-mentioned alien view of the Church the Orthodox teaching that in the midst of all the divisions in Christianity *the Church on earth is one and unique*. It was explained that the essential, logically clear, and natural attributes of the Church had to be, and were, the uninterruptedness of the hierarchy, coming from the Holy Apostles, and the teaching of faith, confessed and kept without change. Such are the outward signs that are understandable for everyone; such is the Orthodox Eastern Church. Thus the question was limited and answered by the teaching about *the Church on earth*.

The question of the Church has become a real one in our days also, but now it has a broader scope. Although the "ecumenical movement" of recent times is occupied not with the question of the unity of faith, but with the aim of participating in the proposed plan of an epochal reconstruction of human society – still, sooner or later, the question of the foundations and scope of Christian faith in this attempt at union will have to arise It is our obligation to show why this movement cannot be justified. But we ourselves will not be completely justified if we descend from the breadth of the Orthodox world-view, with all its fullness, to a narrow platform of conceptions and, most importantly, *to Western conceptions of the Church*.

At one time it was permissible and harmless for the representatives of our church history and theology, when entering into dialogue with Protestantism, to descend to its narrow platform; but in present circumstances this is no longer justified.

Even if a reply were not demanded of us to a movement that is passing us by, that is off to the side of us – still, it is always more consoling for us to acknowledge that we are under the protection of a great heavenly choir of saints, than it is to forget about this...

"Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise" (Luke 23:43) – the holy words pronounced on Golgotha. Paradise! Is this not a forgotten word? After the third chapter of Genesis it is not heard in the Old Testament Scripture. A cherubim with a bared sword was placed to guard the entrance into Paradise. But on the day of Golgotha its gates were opened: "The Cherubim steps away from the tree of life, and the flaming weapon turns to flight." The Old Testament righteous ones, the departed first Christian martyrs entered into the Kingdom of Christ in the heavens.

With the course of decades and centuries the granary of the Lord began to be filled, after the Apostles, with the ranks of martyrs and confessors, hierarchs, ascetics and righteous ones. The Church of the saints lives a life of blessedness in God, with prayers of praise and thanksgiving; and since "love never faileth" (I Cor. 13:8), these are joined by prayers for the brethren on earth. And we also ask their prayers for us and for our close ones who are departed. These prayers, as an expression of spiritual closeness, are intertwined in all directions, drawing heaven near to earth. Indeed, how can we not feel the *closeness* of heavenly and earthly things, when we so desire the blessed life for our close departed ones and entreat the Saviour in prayer for them?

Furthermore, the Orthodox Christian, if he has a living bond with his Church, constantly sees and hears in church and at home reminders of the Invisible Church of the saints, and his soul is in constant contact with thoughts about it. He received in infancy, at his baptism, a Christian name, the name of a saint, and he feels himself especially close to this saint and in his personal prayer entreats the saint to pray to God for him. He looks into his usual calendar, and before his eyes is a monthly list, filled with the names of the saints of all periods of Christianity. He enters the church, and before his eyes there appears another world, the heavenly world fixed in images in the icons, on the iconostasis, on the walls, often in the very peak of the dome.

The Vespers service, beginning with the glorification of the Most Holy Trinity, immediately directs his thoughts to the Kingdom of Christ by the call to come together and worship its Head, "Christ Himself, our King and our God;" and further, the whole service is penetrated with the remembrance of the saints, and especially of the Most Holy Theotokos. In the shortest litany, "Again and again" – which is said nearly ten times in a feast-day Vigil – we are reminded to "call to remembrance the Most Holy, Most Pure, Most Blessed, glorious Theotokos and Ever-virgin Mary, with all the saints," and in such an awareness to commit ourselves and one another to Christ God.

When giving a prosphora for commemoration in the Altar at the Proskomedia before the Liturgy, the Christian who has ever heard an explanation of the Liturgy knows that the particles taken out of the prosphora will be placed on the sacred paten amidst the particles "for the living and the dead" below the set of particles which symbolically represent the whole Church of Christ: in the center the Lamb of God, and on the sides one particle in honor of the Theotokos, and other particles in me-

mory of all the saints in their nine ranks. So close to us is the Heavenly Church that we confide to it all our sorrows, weaknesses, falls, griefs, and joys; we express love for it; we ask its prayers and its help for us.

Such is the spiritual world which is accessible to us even if we live in the usual church parish. Multiply this possibility for those who live in a monastery, and especially for priests or deacons who frequently serve in the Altar, or for those who are assigned to the cliros. It turns out that in the Orthodox Church communion with the saints, with the Invisible Church, can be more intimate than with the world that surrounds us outside the church building; for many it is indeed such.

But is a real earthly communion with the whole earthly Church, dispersed in various nations and states, possible for us? Indeed, within one and the same church parish, does any religious, spiritual communion occur outside the church building? In vain do people lullaby themselves, dreaming of a "fullness" of communion and unity of the whole Christian world on earth.

In our Orthodox Church, however, communion of soul and mind, all our striving, everything is directed to the Heavenly Church, so that it, being invisible, becomes almost visible, and from the distance of the heavenly heights becomes the closest thing to us.

Earth and heaven are a single Church of Christ. This is a Church more complete than any other one that might be organized, even though one might call together and bind with a single name all the varieties of present-day societies and churches which belong to the historical Christianity outside the Church, outside of Orthodoxy.

But isn't our communion with the Heavenly Church one-sided? Does it give benefit to the soul? The saints hear us in the same way one soul hears another. And more than this: on earth the contact between people through the bodily organs of sense somewhat impedes and hinders the immediate communion of souls, but in the heavenly-earthly sphere this communion is free. In this sphere our voice, our words, reading and singing in the work of prayer are necessary for *ourselves*, for *our* sake, so as to unite two or three of us or a whole church into a single common soul, "that with a single heart we may hymn" God and His saints.

It is said of earthly relationships: "Tell me who your friends are, and I'll yell you who you are." "A man learns from the company he keeps" – whether for good or ill. Is it not so also in the purely spiritual sphere? The Apostle John the Theologian instructs in his catholic epistle, which is for all Christians, including ourselves: "I write (the Gos-

pel, the Epistles, the Apocalypse) that ye also may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I John 1:3). He writes this, being in great old age, giving us his testament that men live in common love. The chief of the Apostles writes: "I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance (to prepare yourselves for a free entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord) ... knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shown me. Moreover I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance" (II Peter 1:13, 15).

However, in speaking of a single heavenly-earthly Church, do we not confuse two distinct spheres?

We do not confuse them, but only confess their union: "Having accomplished for us Thy mission and united things on earth with things in heaven, Thou didst ascend into glory, O Christ our God, being nowhere separated from those who love Thee, but remaining ever-present with us and calling: I am with you and no one is against you" (Kontakion of the Ascension). The Canonical Epistle of the Eastern Patriarchs in the 17th century expresses the truth of the unity of the Church in the words: "Two flocks of a single Pastor." And so do we believe...

But why did the Fathers of the Church at the Councils not raise the question of the Heavenly Church, but by the word "Church" always had in mind its existence on earth? And why in their works does one have to "search out" the passages where they ascend to thoughts of the heavenly sphere, giving it the name of "Church"?

This is because they were entrusted with shepherding the earthly flock of Christ: all their thoughts, all their effort and care, concern the ordering and service of what had been entrusted to them – the preservation of the faith and the ordering of the earthly sphere of the Church. But their service was illuminated and received power by the constant *awareness* of being in the single ecumenical heavenly-earthly Kingdom or Body of Christ.

VITA PATRUM

(THE LIFE OF THE FATHERS)

by SAINT GREGORY OF TOURS

Chapter X

SAINT FRIARDUS THE RECLUSE

There are many different ascents by which one can attain heaven, and it is of these, I think, that David spoke: *He hath made ascents in his heart* (Ps. 83:6). These ascents or degrees of different works are received as perfections in the Divine worship, and no one can walk in this way without being called thereto by God's help, as we have said several times. So, in fact, the Psalmist expressed himself concerning that way of perfection when he said, *Except the Lord build the house, in vain do they labor that build it* (Ps. 126:1). And this help has been continually sought not only by the martyrs, but also by all those who have made profession of a holy life and have thus attained to what inflames their spiritual thirst.

And indeed, if the desire for martyrdom is kindled in a heart, the martyr asks for this aid in order to conquer; if one wishes to keep the fast, he asks for it in order to obtain the necessary strength; if one wishes to preserve his members from all attacks against chastity, he prays to be defended by it; if at the beginning of a fault one repents and burns with the desire to be converted, he implores this aid with tears in order to be sustained by it; and if someone tries to accomplish something of all these in order to do well, he asks equally the grace of this assis-

tance. The ascents or steps, then, of this ladder – so difficult, so exalted, so laborious – are very diverse, but by its means one raises himself towards the only God.

That is why one must always ask for this means from Him, one must always seek it, one must always call upon it, in order that what the mind has conceived of good it may accomplish by His aid – concerning which we ought always to say, *Our help is in the name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and the earth* (Ps. 123:8). Thus did that most blessed man of whom we are about to speak, he who in the midst of different temptations and sorrows of this world always claimed heavenly aid.

1. Near the island of Vindunitta, in the territory of Nantes, there was a man of remarkable sanctity named Friardus, concerning whose life I am happy to make known a little for the sake of edifying the Church, since I do not know if anyone else has written of him. From his infancy he was always devoted to God and very chaste. When he became a grown man, he continually spent his life in the praise of God, in prayer and in vigils. With his own hands he drew from the earth those things needful for his subsistence, and although he surpassed others in work, he never ceased to pray – something which, this being the manner of rustics, was a subject of mockery for neighbors and strangers.

One day, when he was gathering sheaves in a wheat field with the other reapers, there was a swarm of those annoying and mischievous flies commonly called wasps; and as they flitted about the crop, pricking the reapers with their stings, the workmen left to the side the place where their nest was, and mocking the blessed Friardus, said to him jokingly, "Let the blessed man come; let the religious man come, who never quits praying and is always making the sign of the Cross on his ears and eyes, who is always showing the sign of salvation on his path; let him reap over the swarm and placate it with his prayer." The Saint, who took these words as a doubt about the Divine power, prostrated himself on the ground while offering his prayer to the Lord, and approaching the wasps made the sign of the Cross, saying, "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who hath made heaven and the earth." As soon as this prayer issued from his mouth, the wasps all went to hide in the hole whence

they had come out, and Friardus, in the sight of all the reapers, cut the wheat in that place without suffering any harm, which he could not have done without a miracle intended for the scoffers, since the Lord granted, for their confusion, to strengthen the one who had hoped in Him.

One time, after that, when he had climbed a tree for a certain task, a branch broke beneath his feet and he fell; while he was falling, at each branch he struck he called upon the most blessed name of Christ, saying, "Almighty Christ, save me." When he hit the ground he found himself unharmed, but he always said, "Our help is in the name of the Lord, Who hath made heaven and the earth."

2. Encouraged by these and other miracles, he began to reflect and to say within his heart, "If the Cross of Christ, and the invocation of His name, and the help asked of Him, have so much power that with them one can overcome all difficulties of this world, avoid dangers, dissipate the horrors of temptation, and raise oneself to contempt for all the delights of this world, what have I to do in the world except to abandon all the things which belong to it and to dedicate myself to the service of Him alone Who, when I called upon His name, delivered me from deadly dangers?" And going out from his little dwelling, forgetting his parents and his fatherland, he went in search of the desert, lest his sojourn in the world be a hindrance to his desire for prayer.

So he and Abba Sabaudus, who had formerly been a minister of King Clothaire and who was undertaking penitence, retired to Vindunitta, an island of the territory of Nantes. They also had the deacon Secundellus with them. But the abba, withdrawing his hand from the Lord's plow, went back to his monastery, and shortly thereafter perished by sword for reasons unknown. As for Saint Friardus, he abode on the island with the deacon Secundellus and did not leave it. Each had his own cell apart from the other.

And as they courageously persevered in prayer, the tempter appeared at night to the deacon Secundellus, taking the form of the Lord and saying to him, "I am Christ, to Whom you pray every day. Already you are holy, and your name is written in the Book of Life with those of My other saints. So go out from this island and perform healings among

the people." Secundellus, taken in by this deception, left the island without saying anything to his companion; and even so, as soon as he laid his hand upon the sick in the name of Jesus Christ, they were healed. But, returning to the island after a long time, he went to find his companion and said to him vaingloriously, "I left the island and worked many miracles among the people." When Friardus, in fear, asked him what that meant, he related simply what he had done. The elder, terror-stricken at this tale, cried with sighs and tears, "Woe to us! For as far as I understand, you have been deceived by the tempter. Go and repent, lest his tricks triumph over you."

Understanding these words and fearing he would perish, the deacon cast himself at the Saint's feet with tears, begging him to intercede for him with the Lord. "Go, and let us together supplicate His almightiness for the salvation of your soul. For the Lord readily has mercy on those who confess their faults, since He has said by His prophet, *I wish not the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live* (Ezech. 33:11)."

But while they were praying, the tempter again appeared under the same form to the deacon Secundellus, saying to him, "Have I not commanded you, because my sheep are sick and are without a shepherd, to go visit them and heal them?" He answered, "I have found in truth that you are the seducer, and I do not believe that you are God, Whose appearance you have falsely taken. Nevertheless, if you are Christ, show me your Cross which you have left, and I will believe in you." And when he would not show it, the deacon made the sign of the Cross in his face, and he vanished in confusion. Yet he came back with a multitude of demons and struck the deacon with such force that he could scarcely recover. But finally the devil went away and reappeared no more. The deacon lived thereafter in great holiness and died when his time was fulfilled.

3. As for blessed Friardus, he shone with brilliant miracles. One day he took up a branch of a tree which the wind had knocked down and which, it is said, he had grafted himself. He made a staff of it for himself, which he carried in his hand. A long time after, he planted in the ground this dried-up staff which, upon frequent watering, put forth leaves

and fruits, and after two or three years became a large tree. But this deed was a great miracle in the eyes of the people, and every day an immense crowd ran to see the tree – so that, by the remoteness of the island, the marvel which had been done acquired a still greater renown, and the Saint of God, fearing to fall prey to the dishonor of vainglory, took an axe and chopped down the tree.

Another time, the Saint, seeing a disaster which had struck a tree covered with flowers, which the violence of a storm had knocked to the ground, was moved with pity and prayed, saying, "I pray Thee, O Lord, that the fruits of this tree may not perish, since it is by Thy will that it produced the flowers with which it is adorned. But, rather, let it be granted from Thee to raise itself up and grow and have the maturity of its fruits." Having prayed thus, he took an axe and separated the trunk from the roots. Then, having sharpened the trunk on the bottom like a stake, he fixed it in the ground, laying it over the roots which still held. Soon buds formed, although there were no roots, the tree regained its original condition, the flowers which had dried out regained their previous freshness, and the same year the tree gave forth fruits to him who had cultivated it with so much care. This miracle causes me to believe that God's mercy is indeed able to grant resurrection of the dead to him who has obtained by his prayers that dried-up trees regain their first vigor.

4. The Saint, after having predicted the time of his death several times to his brothers, felt himself attacked by fever and said to them, "Go to Bishop Felix and tell him of my passing. Say, 'Your brother Friardus has said: See, now the course of my life has come to an end. I am going to depart from this world, and in order that you have complete certitude from my word, know that I will pass away next Sunday in order to go to the rest which God the eternal King has promised me. Come, then, I beg you, so that I may see you before my departure."

But Felix could not come, held up by I know not what reason, and sent to him, saying, "I beg you, if it is possible, to wait a little for me until I can come find you after my judicial affairs are finished." His messengers came back and reported these words to him; although he

was already on his bed, he said, "Then let us get up and wait for our brother." O man of ineffable holiness, who, even though he was in haste to come to his end and to be with Christ, nevertheless did not forget his friend and obtained from God to spend one week more in this world in order to see his brother by spiritual sight. Nor do I believe his merit was little for the arrival of whom the Lord consented to delay the departure of the Saint, who immediately felt the fever leave and got up from his bed feeling well.

Much later, the bishop arrived. The Saint, who had right away been taken with fever, hailed him at his entrance and kissed him, saying, "You made me wait a long time along the way I must follow, O holy bishop." And when they had kept vigil together the whole night, which was that of Sunday, as soon as morning came he gave up the ghost. Immediately the cell was filled with a sweet fragrance and shook: whence it is certain that the power of the angels was there, and that to mark the merit of the Saint it perfumed his whole cell with Divine fragrance. His glorious body was washed and sealed by the bishop in the tomb, and his soul was received in heaven by Christ, leaving the example of his virtues to the inhabitants of the earth.

NOTES

St. Friardus died about 577.

The monastery of St. Friardus has been identified with the village of Besne, on an island near the ocean, north of Nantes in the west of France. The parish church there (which is all that is left of the monastery) has preserved the sepulchres of Sts. Friardus and Secundellus; one kilometer away there is also a chapel and a fountain dedicated to St. Secundellus, who was venerated in the West as a saint. His life is reminiscent of that of St. Nicetas of the Kiev Caves, who also worked "miracles" after being deceived by a demon, until he finally came to his senses and attained true sanctity (see Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov, *The Arena*, pp. 31-34).

Felix was bishop of Nantes from 549 to 582. St. Gregory of Tours was his Metropolitan, but feeling between them was not good, owing to

an abusive letter Felix wrote to him (described by St. Gregory in *The History of the Franks*, V, 5). Thus, St. Gregory's praise of him in the text above is all the more remarkable for its Christian charity.

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Letters

(continued from inside front cover)

dox community in San Juan, Puerto Rico, congratulate your labor in the vineyard of the Lord.

Our Bishop Anthony Chedraoui, who is the General Vicar of the Patriarchate of Antioch, whose Diocese includes the Caribbean area and whose see is the St. George Cathedral in the capital of Mexico, authorized the establishmint of a pro-cathedral in the capital of Puerto Rico, San Juan. This pro-cathedral was established with the purpose of upholding the eastern section of the Carribean. It is under the leadership of the Very Rev. Father John Owen, Administrator of the Orthodox canonical churches in this island.

The patron saint of the pro-cathedral is Saint Christina, whose feast day falls on July 24th. Our pro-cathedral has a membership composed of Greeks, Puerto Ricans, Americans, Ukrainians, Palestinians, Lebanese, Russians, and Syrians. Now we have two churches, one in Bayeman and this new pro-cathedral. We hope that the Lord will continue blessing our church. May God bless you in your labors in His vineyard!

Seminarian Jose Rafael Melendez
San Juan, Puerto Rico

HELP TO BUILD OUR CHURCH

I greet you, all the Christians, in the thrice-holy Trinity, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus has risen, Jesus has risen, Jesus has risen, the Son of God has made all things new to us. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

St. Cyprian Orthodox Church is a small parish, one of the five parishes under the leadership of Fr. Emmanuel Mulunga, who has his headquarters at the Transfiguration Church at Degeya.

Degeya is the first Orthodox church in East Africa, and it has been rebuilt by the courageous parish priest through Wonderful miracles of his hard prayer to the Son of God. St. Cyprian's is one of the churches which followed in the 1930s.

Fellow Christians, we the Orthodox of St. Cyprian's make our prayer in a temporary building which is under the Orthodox Church. It is a school building. This is where we make our prayer for Sunday service only, but when the pupils are at the school, during school days, we make our prayer in the shade of the trees; for example, during 24 April, which was the Holy Friday, the day when Jesus Christ was crucified on the Cross. Apart from that, we don't receive the Holy Communion at Sunday services and even on holy days, because the headquarters of our parish priest is fifteen miles away. The people of St. Cyprian's cannot travel a long distance, as the means of communication to Father Emmanuel Mulunga is very poor. On the road there is a number of road blocks by reckless military men who can take the holy things needed for making the Holy Liturgy. Since Holy Communion is the strength for the Christian, it is like food to people. It is the food for the Church, as the Church of God is not built by the hand of men.

We then call all good Christians to open their hands and give support. The help of people of any nation is accepted in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Praise God and His glorious name. May peace and love of God survive to all the Orthodox.

Yours in Christ,

Parish committee Members

(Approved by Rev. Fr. Emmanuel Mulunga for Bishop of Uganda Theodorous Nankyamas)

Ed. note: Despite the difficulty of communications in Uganda, *perscnal checks* on Western banks do get through and can be cashed. Parcels of clothing and books *are* now being received in the capital, Kampala, although not always outside the capital. The safest way to send checks or parcels is directly to the Church headquarters:

Rt. Rev. Bishop Theodorous
Nankyamas
P.O. Box 3970
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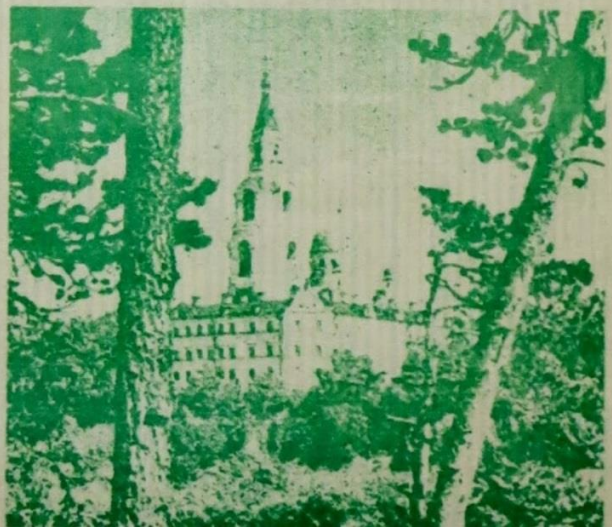

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